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SUBJECT: UK STRESSES FUNDING FOR ADAPTATION AND
DEFORESTATION AS KEY ISSUES FOR COPENHAGEN

¶1. (SBU) Summary. UK Minister of Climate Change Joan Ruddock

(Department of Energy and Climate Change) has called for the December 2009 Copenhagen Climate Change Conference to make as a priority increased funding for adaptation and deforestation to help developing countries address climate change. The UK did not join the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) because of concerns that IRENA's mandate overlaps with other institutions. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) Ruddock addressed a group of MPs, NGOs, and HMG staff in a session of the All Party Parliament Climate Change Group (APPCCC) on January 26. The APPCCC, organized by Colin Challen MP, is a climate change stakeholder forum. This session is one of several scheduled during the coming weeks in the UK Parliament to discuss climate change, highlighting the UK's focus on climate change and development. Ruddock and Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), also called for increased investment in clean technology and strengthening the carbon market infrastructure as other areas to be addressed prior to the Copenhagen negotiations.

UK Highlights Its Financial Support

¶3. (SBU) UK Minister of Climate Change Joan Ruddock called for increasing the flow of adaptation and mitigation funding for developing countries, highlighting the HMG's contribution of 125 million GBP (179 million USD) towards this goal and commitment to double this amount. The HMG's Environmental Transformation Fund, she said, also provides the equivalent of 800 million GBP (1.14 billion USD) in assistance to developing countries to fight climate change and poverty. Ruddock and de Boer both commented on investing in green technologies and strengthening the carbon market infrastructure, but Ruddock added deforestation as another priority for Copenhagen. She said that the formation of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) was a key example of the UK's commitment on this issue. "The UK is exemplary," she said, "in that it is the only country to pass legally binding domestic climate change legislation."

UK Decides Not To Join Renewable Energy Agency

¶4. (SBU) In response to a question regarding the UK's decision to be an observer and not join the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), Ruddock said the HMG is concerned that IRENA's mandate overlaps with other existing international bodies. Chair of the All Party Parliament Climate Change Group Colin Challen MP noted his disagreement with the HMG's decision and also called for the formation of a new HMG agency to focus exclusively on renewable energy.

Much Work To Be Done Before Copenhagen

¶15. (SBU) Executive Secretary for the UNFCCC Yvo de Boer remarked positively on the progress on climate change made in the December 2008 Poznan meeting. He said that a draft text will be circulated in June 2009 in Bonn. He called for more cooperation on technology transfer issues and encouraged the extension of the two percent levy for the "Adaptation Fund" to assist developing countries with climate change goals. The current carbon market infrastructure is inadequate, he said, and stressed the need to find other ways to mobilize funding. He expressed optimism in working with the new Obama Administration on climate change. It will be important in the current economy, he said, to link economic recovery to clean energy industries and investments.

Comment

¶16. (SBU) The UK's interest in working with developing countries on climate change is heartfelt and long-standing. Last autumn, the UK government co-hosted a conference with the Government of Bangladesh in London on dealing with climate change. However, coming up with the corresponding level of resources will be difficult for the HMG during the current economic downturn.

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